



VETERANS TRUST FUND OF SOUTH CAROLINA

Board Meeting Minutes

27 January 2016

1. Call to Order: The Board Meeting of the SC Veterans' Trust Fund (VTF) was called to order at 1:00PM, by Mr. James A. White, Chairman.

2. Attendance:

- a. Present: Howard Metcalf, James Brown, Bevin Studstill, Valerie Brunson, Jimmy Hawk, Jim Lorraine, Chris Maddox, James White.
- b. Absent: Jimmy Lee Wallace, Calvin Lewis, Dale Ellenburg, Gloria Evans, Robin Ghent, Ronald Taylor.

3. Minutes:

Minutes from the 29 July 2015 Meeting were approved as written by a unanimous vote of the Board.

4. Old Business:

- a. Goals: Per Mr. White, one of his goals would be to have the VTF website up and more friendly. Asked if anyone had any suggestions for goals. Mr. Brown suggested Mr. White poll all members for suggestions.
- b. Future meetings: It was decided the meetings would be at 1:00pm the last Wednesday afternoon of the first month of each quarter. Barring any unforeseen events, the following dates were set: 27 April, 27 July, 26 October.
- c. Mr. Metcalf announced the SC Department of Administration (DoA) had released their report with their recommendation on where SCDVA should be located.
 - i. DoA has agreed with the recommendation from SCDVA's stakeholders that SCDVA should be governed by a panel (Governor, Attorney General, Inspector General, Adjutant General), but then recommends it come under the Adjutant General (TAG).
 - ii. The report states: 1) other states come under TAG or are stand-alone – only two come under TAG; 2) SCDVA comes under Military Code in the

South Carolina Code of Laws – SCDVA, along with Military Code, call under Title 25, Military, Civil Defense and Veterans Affairs.

- iii. Mr. Brown reminded all the Adjutant General would no longer be elected, but would be appointed by the Governor.
- iv. Several things need to be clarified. One being if governed by a panel, then will SCDVA just be housed under TAG or would it stay under DoA.
- v. Each error needs to be addressed.
- vi. The SC General Assembly can move OEPP offices/divisions individually (i.e. GAL, SCDVA, Foster Care, etc.).
- vii. For those offices/divisions who asked to become stand-alone, DoA stated "the decision to create a new agency is complex and required more extensive debate and evaluation by the General Assembly regarding the structure of government."
- viii. SCDVA's goal is to administer everything that pertains to veterans including the veterans nursing homes and should be an agency.
- ix. Veteran population in South Carolina is over 400,000 (currently receiving benefits from the USDVA) as compared to over 12,000 personnel in the National Guard.

5. New Business:

a. Secretary's Report:

- i. Website update: several corrections need to be made (change in officers); recommended it have its own tab on the SCDVA website
- ii. Fiscal year ending: Members were advised 2015 had been closed out and information would be sent to the CPA for tax preparation and finance report for Secretary of State.
- iii. Business cards: Members asked for 100 business cards instead of 250. It was also proposed that something about how to donate be printed on the back of the card.

b. Treasurer's Report (was included in packet provided to each member):

- i. Mr. Brown went over the financial statement for 2015 and announced there would be \$20,053.56 available for grants/donations. The Finance Committee (COL Taylor, Messrs. Brown and Maddox) conducted an audit from the beginning of the VTF to the end of 2014 and everything was found to be in order. They would soon be putting something together to close out 2015. Recommendations: Need to get the word out about the VTF through television, media, flyers, etc. Only two checks were written in 2015 (Secretary of State and CPA).
- ii. Changing banks: Messrs. Brown and Metcalf will go to the bank to see what the bank can offer (better interest rate, etc.)
- iii. Mr. Brown suggested the VTF may want to consider investment opportunities and mentioned purchasing CDs. Mr. Brown will report back on this at the next meeting

c. Committee Reports:

i. Public Relations

- 1) Mr. Maddox had a channel doing a radio commercial about the VTF, but that has stopped as the individual is no longer there.
- 2) Mr. White suggested board members give something to their local media and asked Mr. Maddox to provide information.

ii. Grant Management Committee

1) Grants requested:

- a. Low County Veterans Group: Denied: expenditures are for personnel issues, including car, meals and entertainment.
- b. Pelion High School Band: Denied: not a proper application, no services for veterans.

- 2) Need to update website to include an application form and instructions
- 3) Mr. Metcalf said the VTF needed to change their mind set. The VTF does not have to grant the full amount requested by a Grantee; a partial grant can be awarded
- 4) Grant process was discussed: Ms. Di Chiara will forward a copy of any grants received to the Committee. It is the Committee's responsibility to review the grant(s) and then make a recommendation to the Board. The Board also asked if the Grantee could come in to present their request and/or to answer questions.
- 5) Discussion: Due to the recent flooding, the VTF may want to consider applications from groups helping veterans who have been affected. Several groups are out there (i.e. Home Depot). Could extend this to include any natural disasters that affect veterans.

iii. Funding/Resourcing Committee

- 1) Several ideas were discussed as ways to increase funds: banquet, GOFUNDME, Facebook, rallypoint.com
- 2) Need to get flyers, brochures etc. out in the community. Can use mission statement.
- 3) There was discussion about requesting a percentage of a newly proposed tax. Ms. Brunson asked if the VTF could request a percentage of the proposed gas tax increase..
- 4) Mr. Lorraine mentioned several possibilities for fund raising and will discuss these with Mr. Ellenburg.

d. Other New Business:

i. Legislation:

- 1) The Veterans Study Committee, consisting of three House and three Senate members, is trying to get extended. Mr. Hawk asked if the VTF could meet with the Study Committee. Mr. Brown will discuss this with Representative Smith, Chair of the Study Committee.

- 2) Thirteen pieces of legislation were pre-filed dealing mostly with the military and National Guard.
- 3) This is the second year of a 2-year session.
- 4) The House passed the income tax exemption on military retirement income, now in a Senate Subcommittee. Have business community and Military Base Task Force behind this.
- 5) The Rally for our Veterans will be 20 April 2016 on the north steps of the State House. Need to let Mr. Brown know of any veterans' issues that should be addressed or identified at the Rally.
- 6) Legislation pertaining to veterans is down this year.
- ii. Mr. White advised the Board that there would be a small operating budget for the VTF.
- e. Statement of Economic Interest Forms
There were no questions or concerns at this time. Those in attendance confirmed they had received the information from Ms. Di Chiara.

6. Taskings and "Due Outs":

- a. Mr. White to poll members for possible VTF goals
- b. Ms. Di Chiara will provide update on business cards
- c. Finance Committee to conduct audit of fiscal year 2015
- d. Mr. Brown to report back to the Board regarding investment opportunities (i.e. CDs).
- e. Mr. Maddox to provide Board with information for media/PSA announcements.
- f. Mr. Brown requested suggestions of issues pertaining to veterans for the Rally.

7. Identification of Next Meeting:

The next meeting of the Board of the Veterans' Trust Fund of South Carolina will be 27 April 2016.

9. Adjournment – the meeting adjourned at 3:00 PM, 27 January 2016.

Attachments:

Financial Report

p.p. Bevin Studstill
Bevin Studstill, Secretary

02 February 2014
Date of Approval

James A. White
James A. White, Chair
Veterans' Trust Fund of South Carolina

04 March 2016
Date of Approval